

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following claim listing will replace all previous listings of the claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of ~~modulating~~downregulating the inflammatory response in a mammal, said method comprising ~~modulating~~downregulating the functional activity of activin A or activin B ~~wherein upregulating activin or fragments, derivatives, mutants or variants thereof to a functionally effective level in said mammal induces, maintains or upregulates the pro-inflammatory mediator cascade and downregulating activin to a functionally ineffective level in said mammal inhibits or retards the pro-inflammatory mediator cascade~~ wherein the downregulation is achieved by introducing into said mammal an activin antagonist.
2. (Currently amended) A method of therapeutically and/or prophylactically treating a condition, ~~or a predisposition to the development of a condition,~~ characterised by an aberrant, unwanted or otherwise inappropriate inflammatory response in a mammal, said method comprising ~~modulating~~downregulating the ~~level~~functional activity of activin A or activin B ~~or fragments, derivatives, mutants or variants thereof in said mammal where upregulating activin to a functionally effective level upregulates the pro-inflammatory mediator cascade and downregulating activin to a functionally ineffective level inhibits or retards the pro-inflammatory mediator cascade~~ wherein the downregulation is achieved by introducing into said mammal an activin antagonist.
- 3-4. (Cancelled)
5. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~[[3]]~~1 or ~~[[4]]~~2 wherein said inflammatory response is a local inflammatory response.
6. (Original) The method according to claim 5 wherein said local inflammatory response occurs in the context of airway inflammation, rheumatoid arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, pancreatitis, atherosclerosis, meningitis, appendicitis, angiogenesis, psoriasis, neural protection,

renal tubular necrosis, allergic responses, rheumatoid arthritis, encephalitis, multiple sclerosis, traumatic brain injury, and wound healing.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 6 wherein said airway inflammation is asthma, interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis, lung transplantation, bronchiolitis obliterans, emphysema, obstructive pulmonary disease, severe acute respiratory syndrome, asbestosis, obstructive sleep apnoea, hypoxia or pulmonary hypertension.

8. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 6 wherein said wound healing is associated with surgery or burns.

9. (Withdrawn and currently amended) The method according to claim ~~[[3]]~~1 or ~~[[4]]~~2 wherein said inflammatory response is a systemic inflammatory response.

10. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of claims 5 to 9~~ claim 1 or 2 wherein said inflammatory response is acute.

11. (Original) The method according to claim 10 wherein said acute inflammatory response is associated with septic shock, septicaemia, airway inflammation, appendicitis, meningitis, hepatic response to toxins or viruses, angiogenesis, psoriasis, neural protection, atherosclerosis, renal tubular necrosis, wound healing or traumatic injury.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 11 wherein said airway inflammation occurs in the context of asthma, interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis, lung transplantation, bronchiolitis obliterans, emphysema, obstructive pulmonary disease, severe acute respiratory syndrome, asbestosis, obstructive sleep apnoea, hypoxia or pulmonary hypertension.

13. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 10 wherein said acute systemic inflammatory response occurs in the context of systemic inflammatory response syndrome.

14. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 13 wherein said systemic inflammatory response syndrome is sepsis, septicaemia, toxic shock, septic shock, tissue trauma, meningitis or appendicitis.

15. (Withdrawn and currently amended) The method according to claim ~~[[3]]~~1 or ~~[[5]]~~2 wherein said inflammatory response is a chronic response.

16. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 15 wherein said chronic inflammatory response is multiple sclerosis, inflammatory bowel disease, rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, psoriasis or wound healing.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently amended) The method according to claim ~~[[17]]~~ 1 or 2 wherein said downregulation of the inflammatory response is achieved by ~~downregulating~~modulating the pro-inflammatory cytokine cascade.

19. (Original) The method according to claim 18 wherein said pro-inflammatory cytokine cascade corresponds to the expression of TNF α , IL-1 and/or IL-6.

20. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1-16 wherein said modulation is upregulation of activin functional activity and said upregulation is achieved by introducing into said mammal a nucleic acid molecule encoding activin or functional equivalent, derivative, or homologue thereof or the activin expression product or functional fragment, derivative, mutant or variant thereof.

21. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1-19 wherein said modulation is achieved by introducing into said mammal a proteinaceous or non-proteinaceous molecule which modulates transcriptional and/or translational regulation of the activin gene.

22. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1-16 wherein said modulation is upregulation of activin functional activity and said upregulation is achieved by introducing into said mammal a proteinaceous or non-proteinaceous molecule which functions as an agonist of the activin expression product.

23. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of claims 1-19~~ claim 1 or claim 2 wherein said modulation is ~~downregulation of activin functional activity and said downregulation is achieved by introducing into said mammal~~ said antagonist is a proteinaceous or non-proteinaceous molecule which functions as an antagonist to the activin expression product.

24-25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 23 wherein said antagonist is follistatin or ~~functional fragments, derivative, homologue or mimetic thereof,~~ an agent that upregulates the levels of the α subunit of inhibin, inhibin, an agent that upregulates the levels of β_C , an activin neutralising antibody or an activin mutant.

27. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 23 wherein said antagonist is an anti-activin antibody.

28. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 27 wherein said antibody is directed to the β_A subunit of activin.

29. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 27 wherein said antibody is directed to the β_B subunit of activin.

30. (Currently amended) The method according to ~~any one of claims 1-29~~ or 2 wherein said mammal is a human.

31-60. (Cancelled)